

[Chinese and Japanese Folk Stuff]

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FORM A

Circumstances of Interview

STATE: WASHINGTON

NAME OF WORKER: STAFFORD LEWIS

ADDRESS: 4612 Brandon Street

DATE: December 21, 1938.

SUBJECT: CHINESE AND JAPANESE FOLK STUFF

1. Mrs. Ruth Chinn, informant: 200-17th Avenue, Seattle, Washington.
2. Interview held at 2:00 P.M. Dec. 21, 1938
3. At the Chinese Recreational Center, 671 Weller Street
4. WPA Information Bureau, furnished name and address of Mrs. Chinn, making interview at the Chinese Recreation Center possible.
5. I went alone.
6. The Recreation Center is a vacant store building, now furnished with two ping pong tables and a broad wooden table, used as a desk by the Recreation attendants. This Center is located in the heart of Seattle's Chinatown.

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FORM B

Personal History of informant.

STATE: WASHINGTON

NAME OF WORKER: STAFFORD LEWIS

ADDRESS: 4612 Brandon Street

SUBJECT: Chinese Folk Tales.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT: Mrs. Ruth Chinn; 200-17th Ave. So. Seattle, Wash.

1. Ancestry; Chinese.
2. She was born in Seattle. (Much of this information requested is not available, as Chinese are suspicious and fear a misuse of this personal information.)
5. Her education was completed in Ling Nan University, Canton, China. (No dates)
9. Mrs. Chinn is small; slim, young, and pretty, in spite of the Chinese characteristic wide and flattened nose.
10. No other points gained . Her modesty and fear of not telling a story well , made getting any story at all almost impossible.

It was summer in Canton, China and very hot. So the American (-)/ Born Chinese boys from Seattle changed to white linen suits and tropical clothing such as is worn in India and other hot countries[.?] They had been sent to Ling Nan University to complete their education in the Chinese language and history. These boys were from wealthy or well to

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do families, their ages ranging from 14 to 10 years. Chinese boys from all over the world go to this / University.

Professor Wong especially, didn't like the Seattle boys because they were mischievous and played practical jokes. Besides their manners were bad, they were frank and outspoken, they ate too much and spent money they should have saved, for extra meals and picture shows.

The true Chinese boys Professor Wong held up as an example were quiet and mild. They sat down thankfully to their meals in the mess hall that was poorly made up of loose boards and bamboo thatching . , / And were willing to leave the table half = filled and hungry, without protest. The Seattle boys thought the food was stale and scantily portioned out. So after eating in the mess hall they would use their money to take a launch across the water to Canton. They would go to a hotel and get a good meal, of fresh and plentiful food.

Wing was the leader of a little group of three Seattle boys, and Wing liked to correct Professor Wong whenever his American-gained knowledge gave him a chance . , / Making Professor Wong very angry and leading him to use his position of / Professor in charge of Wing's dormitory to teach Wing and the other Seattle boys good manners and the value of money through strict discipline.

So Wing was no longer allowed to play his guitar with American harmony and sing American songs after 10 o'clock at night, when all lights had to be out and silence was compulsory. Professor Wing thought Chinese music that cannot be harmonized, much more seemly than the discordant noises Wing and his companions 2 took such delight in. Then, to correct the boys of extravagance, he forced the Seattle boys to put all their money in the treasury— and whenever they asked for their own money, they would only receive a dollar.

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This wasn't enough, it cost 20 [?] cents to cross the water to Canton in a launch, 20 [?] cents a show and at least 60 [?] cents for a meal. After 6 in the evening, the boys would have to hire a sampan to get back to the / University and this cost much more than the motor launch, 60 or 80 cents.

The boys said, we pay for our education and should be able to lead our own lives, as we do in America. We must all work together to force Professor Wong to break away from his severe rules.

Then the Seattle boys would slip out of the dormitory and play their guitars and sing American songs under the / Professor's window as he was trying to sleep. But this only made Wong more strict[.?] He gave Wing and his friends much extra work on studies the boys thought were very dry . , / Tying them down even more.

In desperation, while the Professor was out of the dormitory, the boys took all his white linen out of the closet and spilled ink all over them it . Then they put the suits back with a note saying.

“Try and find out who did this.”

Professor Wong went to bed without noticing his clothing— but the next morning none of his clothing was fit to wear.

Of course, Wong knew who had spoiled his clothing as the resentment of the Seattle boys against his rules was not hidden from him. And only the American chinese boys would have the courage necessary to attempt such a destructive trick.

Professor Wong called Wing and his two best friends in his office and gave them the choice of either buying a complete new outfit of clothing for him or being expelled. The

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boys decided to be expelled as they were all anxious to return to Seattle where there was good food and they could lead their own lives.